



Trick or Treatment: The Undeniable Facts about Alternative Medicine

By Edzard Ernst, Simon Singh

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“For anyone who has ever wondered about the scientific evidence for the effectiveness of . . . alternative therapies.”?Susan Okie, *Washington Post*

Whether you are an ardent believer in alternative medicine, a skeptic, or are simply baffled by the range of services and opinions, this groundbreaking analysis lays to rest doubts and contradictions with authority, integrity, and clarity. Over thirty of the most popular treatments?including acupuncture, homeopathy, aromatherapy, reflexology, chiropractic, and herbal medicines?are examined for their benefits and potential dangers. What works and what doesn't? Who can you trust, and who is ripping you off? In its scrutiny of alternative and complementary cures, this book also strives to reassert the primacy of the scientific method as a means for determining public health practice and policy.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Noted science writer Singh and British professor of complementary medicine Ernst offer a reasoned examination of the research on acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic, herbal medicine and other alternative treatments. Singh (*Fermat's Last Theorem*) and Ernst work hard to be objective, but their conclusion is that these therapies are largely worthless. As they examine the research on various alternative therapies, the authors explore the principles of evidence-based medicine on which their conclusions are based, including clinical trials and the placebo effect; they also explore related ethical issues. The authors report that many patients will improve with any alternative remedy—but no more than those given a placebo. Exceptions exist; some herbal remedies (e.g., St. John's wort, echinacea) can be helpful though not always advisable, and chiropractors can relieve low back pain under certain circumstances. This is a stimulating and informative account that will be indispensable to anyone considering an alternative treatment, though it may not dissuade true believers. 16 illus. (Aug.)

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Review

“Entertaining as well as informative. . . . The examination of evidence is comprehensive, forensic, and for champions of these therapies, damning.” (Toby Murch - Nature)

“Physicians should recommend the book to their patients, and it will help health practitioners provide patients with sound advice.” (New England Journal of Medicine)

About the Author

Edzard Ernst, based at the University of Exeter, is the UK's first professor of complementary medicine.

Best-selling author and science journalist Simon Singh lives in London. His books include *Fermat's Last Theorem*, *The Code Book*, and *Big Bang*.

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